

Sign Types & Definitions

WALL SIGN
a sign attached to, painted on, or erected against the wall of a building or structure including any interior wall whether attached to windows or otherwise which is placed in view of the general public from outside the structure

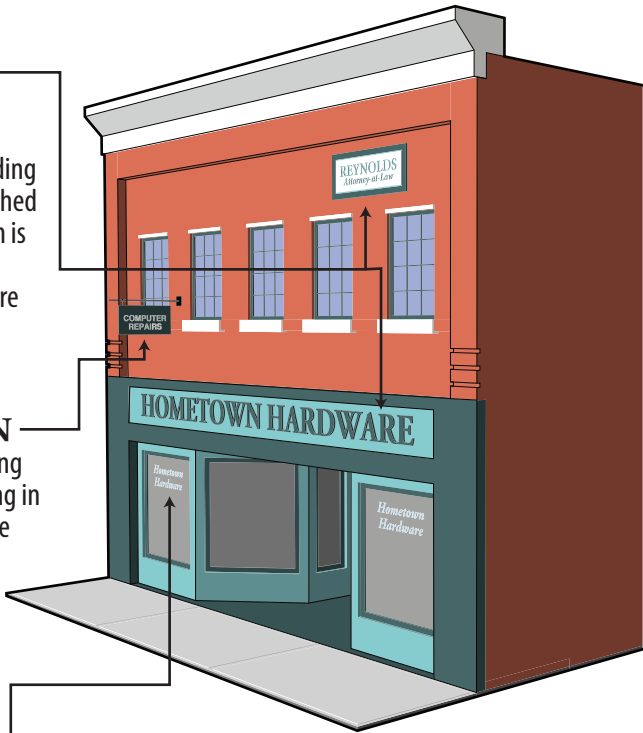
PROJECTING SIGN
a wall sign attached to a building or other structure and extending in whole or in part more than nine inches from any portion of the structure's facade

WINDOW SIGN
a wall sign attached to, painted on, or erected on the interior of a window with the exposed face of the sign in a plane parallel to the face of said window, including any stand, shelving, counter or other structure which is placed in view of the general public from outside the structure



FREE-STANDING SIGN
a sign detached from any building

DIRECTORY SIGN
a freestanding sign erected at an entrance to one property or multiple properties served by a common curb-cut and listing those businesses, organizations or entities at that location



Design Guidance

- Signs should:
- ✓ Be visually compatible & harmonious with associated development
 - ✓ Be compatible in design and color to the structures on the site
 - ✓ Be consistent in terms of color, graphic style, lighting, location, material and proportions with other signs on the site
 - ✓ Contain a minimum amount of lettering, colors and other design features necessary to clearly communicate their message
 - ✓ Avoid using more than 3 predominant colors
 - ✓ Be designed and constructed of durable materials
 - ✓ Be logically located, such as within or just above storefront window, when mounted on a building facade
 - ✓ Be placed in a manner that complements the architecture of buildings, when mounted on a building facade
 - ✓ Not extend above the eaves, nor block access to any window or door, when mounted on a building facade
 - ✓ Be aesthetically landscaped, when free-standing

- The following are not allowed:
- ✗ Signs on roofs (signs on parapet walls may be allowed)
 - ✗ Signs that block windows or doors
 - ✗ Signs that extend beyond the top or edge of the wall
 - ✗ Signs on a tree, rock or other natural feature
 - ✗ Signs that move or have moving parts
 - ✗ Banners, pennants, balloons (flags may be allowed)
 - ✗ Signs with flashing, intermittent, rotating or moving lights
 - ✗ Signs with string lighting
 - ✗ Signs that contain obscene, indecent or lewd content
 - ✗ Signs constructed of paper, cardboard or similar material
 - ✗ Signs intended to be primarily readable from the interstate
 - ✗ Billboards

Note: The official and complete version of the sign regulations are found in Section 2.18 of the Colchester Zoning Regulations.

answers to common questions about SIGNS and colchester's zoning regulations



Sign Standards

For signs in most of Colchester's commercial or industrial zoning districts. There are special standards for signs in the GD-3 and GD-4 districts, as well as for signs in residential districts.

Freestanding or monument signs:

- ✓ max # of signs = 1 sign per road access
- ✓ max sign area = 32 sf for lots smaller than 40,000 sf (additional area allowed for larger lots)
- ✓ max height = 10 feet for signs up to 32 sf in area or 12 feet for larger signs
- ✓ no sign dimension shall be 5 times larger than any other

Wall signs:

- ✓ max # of signs = 2 (more may be allowed on lots with multiple uses & buildings)
- ✓ max sign area = lesser of 100 sf or a 5% of signable wall area (10% if no freestanding sign)
- ✓ max projection from wall = 2 ft

Hanging or projecting signs:

- ✗ not allowed (are allowed in the GD-3 and GD-4 districts)

Window signs:

- ✓ max sign area = 25% of window area

Directory signs:

- ✓ max # of signs = 2 per building

Temporary signs are allowed with a special permit:

- ✓ A-frame, banner or sandwich board up to 10 sf in area can be permitted for display up to 5 days in any month or for daily use with an annual permit
- ✓ Other temporary signs up to 32 sf in area may be permitted for display up to 5 days in any month

Electronic message signs may be allowed if:

- ✓ The sign is not more than 10 sf in area
- ✓ The display is static (no scrolling text, animation, videos)
- ✓ The duration of each message is at least 5 minutes

